

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSULATE MUNICH

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1667

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR SHERER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CZ (SLAGOVIC, VILIAM)

SUBJECT: THE METEORIC RISE OF VILIAM SALGOVIC

REF: PRAGUE A-92, JULY 1, 1975 (NOTAL)

1. TWO WEEKS AGO THE EMBASSY REPORTED THAT A NOTORIOUS SLOVAK HARD-LINER, VILIAM SALGOVIC, HAD BEEN NAMED TO THE SLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY (KSS) PRESIDUM, TO FILL A VACANCY CREATED BY THE DEATH OF ANOTHER PRESIDUM MEMBER, ONDREJ KLOKOC. AMONG SALGOVIC'S DISTURBING POLITICAL CREDENTIALS WAS HIS FORMAL ARREST AS A TRAITOR BY CZECHOSLOVAK

AUTHORITIES LATE IN AUGUST, 1968 FOR HAVING WORKED HARD TO CONVINCE THE SOVIETS TO INVADE CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THEN, HAVING BEEN SPIRITED OUT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS CZECHOSLOVAK MILITARY ATTACHE IN
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BUDAPEST, SALGOVIC QUICKLY MADE HIS WAY BACK IN 1970 INTO SLOVAK

POLITICS AND ALSO WAS APPOINTED MEMBER AND SUBSEQUENTLY VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY AUDIT AND CONTROL COMMISSION, UNDER MILOS JAKES.

2. APPARENTLY, SALGOVIC HAD BEEN SLATED FOR EVEN GREATER HONORS. RUDE PRAVO JULY 8 REPORTED ON ITS FRONT PAGE THAT THIS MAN HAD JUST BEEN ELECTED TO THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL IN A SPECIAL BY-ELECTION. IF THAT WERE NOT ENOUGH TO SIGNAL HIS STARTLING RISE TO NEW POLITICAL POWER, RUDE PRAVO ALSO REPORTED THAT THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL MET IN SPECIAL SESSION JULY 7, SPECIFICALLY CONVENED TO ELECT UNANIMOUSLY--BY SECRET BALLOT OF THE LEGISLATORS--VILAM SALGOVIC AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL, ONCE AGAIN A POSITION HELD BY THE LATE KLOKOC. RUDE PRAVO'S ACCOUNT OF THE CONGRATULATIONS PERSONALLY OFFERED THE NEW SLOVAK COUNCIL CHAIRMAN READ LIKE A WHO'S WHO OF SLOVAKIA, AND OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA AS WELL. SLOVAKS LENART, COLOTKA, HRUSKOVIC, DURKOVIC, PESLAR, AND CZECHS VACLAV DAVID, DALIBOR HANES, EVZEN ERBAN (AMONG OTHERS) APPARENTLY WERE THERE TO SHAKE SALGOVIC'S HAND. IN ADDITION, TWO OTHERS ROSE INTO POWER ON SALGOVIC'S COAT TAILS. RUDE PRAVO ANNOUNCED THAT "IN THE SPIRIT" OF SALGOVIC'S NEW GOVERNMENT POSITIONS, THE KSS HAD SELECTED MIROSLAV BODA AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY AUDIT AND CONTROL COMMISSION, AND JAN GUSPAN AS COMMISSION MEMBER.

3. COMMENT: WE DON'T KNOW WHETHER SALGOVIC'S ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL, A NECESSARY STEP FOR HIM TO BECOME ITS CHAIRMAN, OCCURRED BEFORE HIS NOMINATION TO THE KSS PRSIDIUM TWO WEEKS AGO: TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THIS HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC. IT IS A STRIKING COINCIDENCE THAT THE NEWS OF HIS ARRIVAL IN THE SLOVAK LEGISLATURE --AND AS ITS CHIEF, TO BOOT--SHOULD FOLLOW SO CLOSELY ON THE HEELS OF HIS NEW SLOVAK PARTY POSTING. FOR CERTAIN, SALGOVIC NOW IS "IN PLACE," FILLING THE SAME TWO PARTY AND GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS HELD BY THE DECEASED KLOKOC. NO DOUBT DISTURBING IN THE EYES OF MOST CZECHOSLOVAKS, GIVEN HIS 1968 TRACK RECORD, SALGOVIC'S POLITICAL ATTITUDES NEVERTHELESS SEEM TO SERVE HIM WELL; RUDE PRAVO'S JUNE 8 ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE PORTRAYED THE MAN AS COMPLETELY LOYAL TO CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY PRECEPTS, EVEN AS IT WAS SILENT ON WHAT HE WAS DOING FOR A LIVING BETWEEN AUGUST, 1968 AND EARLY 1970. RUDE PRAVO HAS BEEN EQUALLY SILENT OVER PUBLIC CONFIDENTIAL

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CONGRATULATIONS FROM FELLOW SLOVAK GUSTAV HUSAK FOR THE NEW SLOVAK COUNCIL CHAIRMAN/KSS PRESIDUM MEMBER. APPARENTLY NONE HAVE BEEN OFFERED BY CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S PRESIDENT AND CP LEADER.
PERRY

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